

# Examiners' Report Summer 2007

GCE O Level

GCE O Level Islamiyat (7568)

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# O Level Islamiyat (7568) Report

## Introduction

The 2007 entry figures showed a decrease of 530 candidates as against 659 in 2006. Thus the entry was similar to the 2005 figure.

The structure and demands of the Question Paper remained unchanged from previous years. The paper gave all students the opportunity to display their knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills.

The vast majority of candidates performed impressively, some scripts were quite outstanding and fully deserved the marks awarded. Section One in its entirety was answered well and most candidates dealt confidently with Sections Two and Three. The general picture, therefore, is that the 2007 cohort performed at a similar level to earlier years.

## Section One: The Qur'an and Hadith

Question 1 (b)(iii) produced some vague answers, e.g., "because it is his name in the Qur'an".

Question 1 (c) was the least popular of the three Surahs. In part (i), some candidates just quoted "witchcraft" or "blowers on knots" from the Surah, but black magic was not considered a physical danger, whereas crimes committed under cover of darkness were.

Question 2 (a)(ii) required an individual example, not a reference to conversion.

In Question 2 (b)(i), surprisingly few candidates really knew what sadaqah was.

In Question 2 (c)(i). Shouting at parents was not accepted for credit.

In Question 2 (d)(ii), repeated reference to Allah's greatness was the point to be made in this question, however many candidates did not see this.

Question 2 (e)(ii) required specific examples, as detailed in the mark scheme.

In Question 3 (c), many candidates did not read the question properly - "when it is in use" - and "tilawah" was frequently taken as just "recitation", sometimes with the word "loudly" tagged on.

In Question 3 (e)(ii), those candidates who answered correctly showed the need for "peace" in a troubled world.

## Section Two: The Life, Teaching and Achievements of the Prophet

In Question 4, most candidates answered parts (a) and (c) well but not part (b). Candidates wrote about, for example, Abu Talib loving the Prophet more than his own children, but did not draw out his influence in the ways suggested in the mark scheme. Much narrative was also included, such as the encounter with Bahira, the Christian monk. This is an example where reading the question correctly and carefully would have helped candidates gain marks. Some useful discussions were seen in response to part (c).

In Question 5 part (a), only a few candidate gave a third reason for migration, i.e., the loss of the Prophet's wife and uncle, even though the Year of Sorrow had been frequently mentioned in answers to Question 4. Sensible arguments were produced in part (c), although some candidates did not limit their answers to the event of the Hijrah itself.

Question 6 was tackled well by most candidates, especially part (a). Discussions in part (b) tended to run along similar lines to those in Question 12(c), ie extolling the virtues of a severe law in maintaining good order in society, rather than weighing the relative merits of justice and mercy. Although many candidates wrote about being against mercy, those who backed it in their response tended to produce more mature comments than the dissenters.

Question 7 was answered well. However, a few candidates produced accounts of the battle itself and its aftermath in response to part (b) rather than writing about the Prophet's character (this is another example where reading the question properly would have helped candidates gain marks). To note, the treatment of prisoners was always taken as an example of mercy, rather than justice/observing the rules of Jihad, etc.

Question 8 was chosen by very few candidates. Often details of the pilgrimage and final sermon were given in part (a) which was not what the question required. In most instances the conquest of Makkah was used to answer part (c) while some candidates wrote about the establishment of Islam.

## Section Three (for Sunni students)

In Question 9, answers to part (a) produced a great variety of reasons, besides those suggested in the mark Scheme and most earned credit. There was a fine distinction in part (b), not always observed by candidates, between "use" and "treatment". Some responses gave undue emphasis in part (c) to the word "reading". Those candidates who drew a comparison with other sources of Divine Law, such as the Hadith and Sunnah gained more marks.

Question 10 was attempted by a minority of candidates. Some candidates knew much about Adam, especially the expulsion from the Garden and the building of the Ka'bah. Accounts of Ibrahim concentrated on the leaving of Hagar and Isma'il in the desert and the near sacrifice of Isma'il. Very few candidates had difficulty with the Hajj connection in part (b), and many answers to part (c) scored full marks.

In Question 11, the key point in part (a) was the reference to the Qur'an. Some candidates knew the teaching and scored full marks. There were also some vague responses to part (b) and (c). While the information that the Prophet defended the

honour of his wives was generally overlooked, his treatment of his children was better known. In part (c), not all candidates understood the implications of the quotation, ignoring the words "even more" and simply writing about the importance of family life. This again shows the importance of reading the question carefully.

Question 12 was on the whole, very well answered. It had obvious links to Question 6, especially in part (c). Some candidates rightly wrote about unintentional murder in part (a), other candidates just referred to for example blood money, thus not confining their answers to punishments. In part (b), the majority of candidates, explained correctly why murder is an offence against Allah, but answers regarding theft and slander answered less well. A thoughtful answer given by some candidates was that theft shows a lack of belief in Allah to provide a person's needs. In the main the discussions in part (c) followed orthodox lines, with the majority supporting the law, and earning credit. The "deterrence factor" was prominent.

Question 13 was, in most cases, answered poorly. Some responses were repetitive. There was much description of early morning before the fast began. Some candidates just wrote that they fasted all day until the evening prayers and then broke the fast with dates, following which they ate a meal - and they did that every day in Ramadan. Part (b) was frequently not based on Qur'anic teaching and again made use of material more suited to part (c), for example, health reasons and caring for the poor.

Question 14 was only attempted by a minority of candidates. In part (a), a few candidates gave all of Umar's military exploits while others made a lot of Umar and his slave taking turns to ride his camel into Jerusalem. Candidates in general did not give the date of Jerusalem's fall. Answers to imitating the Prophet's example were limited. In view of the present world situation, answers to part (c) were underdeveloped.

#### **Section Four (for Shi'ah students)**

Only a small number of candidates attempted questions from this section.

## General Comments

This report has contained a number of examples where candidates would have benefited from reading the question properly.

Examples of basic misreading of the question include, Question 3 (c)(i) "when it is in use" was commonly read as "when it is not in use". In Question 8(a) candidates often ignored "following" which was a key word. In Question 11(a) and 13(b) a key phrase was often ignored eg "according to the Qur'an". In Question 14(a) only part of the sentence seemed to have been read.

There were also cases where candidates did not interpret the question as expected. For example in Question 9(c) where emphasis was placed on the word "reading". In Question 11(c) the phrase "even more" was not accorded sufficient attention. In Question 14 (c) the full implication of the quotation was not taken on board.

In some questions candidates did not develop points sufficiently to gain all the marks available. One example was Question 4(b) where candidates were asked to give four ways in which the Prophet's uncle influenced the Prophet's life. Many candidates correctly identified the shepherd, the merchant and the marriage to Khadijah, but did not develop these points. For example, the shepherd-Prophet naturally gained pastoral skills which characterised so much of his later life. As a merchant his honesty, justice and truthfulness became legendary and were the reasons why his Ummah became so renowned. His marriage to Khadijah was so important to the Prophet that he would not look at another woman while she was alive. Centres and candidates should note that it is important to identify an point and then develop it where the number of marks available indicate that some development of the issue is worthwhile.



## Statistics

### Overall Subject Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Overall subject grade boundaries	100	69	61	53	48	38





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